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NUTRITION COMMITTEE NEWS

For exchange of information on nutrition education and school lunch activities.

JULY-AUGUST 1953

WASHINGTON, D. C.

NUTRITION COMMITTEES—HOW THEY FUNCTION

MAJOR PURPOSES

Improving diets and the nutritional health of people are goals common to all Nutrition Committees. Their achievement is sought primarily through the combined activities of member agencies. As a group, Committees can speak with more authority and take actions that members can not take individually.

Activities of Committees vary with problems or situations in their States or communities. A composite list shows that, among other activities, Committees—

•Exchange Information

Review current programs, materials, and methods of work of member agencies so that resources of each may be fully utilized, duplication avoided, and plans made to meet needs otherwise neglected. . . . Bring new nutrition knowledge and materials to attention of Committee personnel. . . . Agree upon recommended food preservation processes for community teaching.

•Find Out Local Situation

Assemble and evaluate pertinent existing facts relating to food conditions in their area and to the nutritional health of the people. . . . Suggest needed research and encourage its development.

•Give Advice Upon Request

Serve as consultants to public and private groups on food and nutrition problems. . . . Give information to legislators and support legislation designed to improve nutrition and health. . . . Tell teachers and students in high schools and colleges of vocational opportunities in food and nutrition.

•Cooperate With Other Groups

Work with national, State, and local agencies and organizations on problems relating to food and nutrition. . . . Stimulate and support local nutrition programs and activities. . . . Help State agencies select professionally qualified personnel. . . . Assist in programs to improve school lunches. . . . Assist in programs to improve nutrition teaching in schools. . . . Encourage employers to provide adequate food service for employees. . . . Work with producers and distributors to make available foods that will improve diets and with consumers to promote use of the

foods. . . . Assist in the Civil Defense program. Help in emergencies.

•Teach Food and Nutrition

Sponsor refresher courses, workshops, and institutes to acquaint workers with new research findings. . . . Spread reliable nutrition information and combat that which is false and misleading. . . . Teach children and adults the value of good nutrition to health. . . . Promote nutrition education among industrial workers. . . . Show value of producing and preserving food at home.

MEMBERSHIP

On the whole, organizations rather than persons are members of Nutrition Committees; these are usually listed in the constitution or governing policies. A few Committees explicitly specify that organizations shall select as representatives professional persons engaged in a nutrition program. Persons not representing agencies are usually admitted to membership by vote of the whole Committee or of the executive committee. In South Carolina the Governor appoints new members on the Committee's recommendation. Georgia invites as members any citizens interested in nutrition.

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THE WHY OF THIS ISSUE

High interest in Committee organization and experience observed at the National Food and Nutrition Institute held in Washington, D. C., December 1952, led to this issue. Information came from constitutions, letters, and conference reports in our files.

Basic purposes and goals are similar among Committees. But the organizations through which Committees function have been developed to fit their particular situations and therefore vary greatly. More details about their structures, relationships, and programs can probably be obtained from nutrition Committee chairmen. Their names and addresses are given in the March NCN.

Some Committees include those whose primary interest is not nutrition but who might be able to further the purposes of the Committee. For example, the West Virginia Council has as members State agencies; medical, dental, dietetics, nursing, and home economics associations; universities and colleges; women's and garden clubs; a farm organization; Parent-Teacher Association; Boy Scouts; American Red Cross; unions; miller, grocer, and restaurant associations; and West Virginia industrial and manufacturing concerns.

Classes of Membership

Committees may have more than one type of membership. In New York State, each public and private agency specified in the constitution designates three staff members actively engaged in a nutrition program for election to *active* membership in the Committee. They serve for 3 years. If they leave their positions they automatically cease to be active members. Representatives of professional organizations, teachers of nutrition, chairmen of local nutrition committees, and staff members of State or voluntary agencies who are not active members may be *associate* members. The executive committee may select as *advisory* members representatives of agencies or groups able to serve the Committee in any way. *Honorary* members, also designated by the executive committee, are former members who have made outstanding contributions to the Committee's work. Associate, advisory, and honorary members differ from active members primarily in that they do not have voting rights.

The Chicago Nutrition Association, Inc., also has several classes of memberships; (1) *Active*—nutritionists who meet qualifications for membership in the American Home Economics and Dietetics Associations and members of allied professions active in nutrition education programs; (2) *associate*—those not eligible for active membership but who are interested and able to contribute to the Association's program; and (3) *sustaining*—individuals, organizations, or business firms interested in furthering the objectives and contributing \$100 or more a year to the Association's work.

ORGANIZATION

Constitutions

A number of Nutrition Committees have constitutions or statements of aims or governing policies, while other Committees have not felt the need for so formalizing their procedures.

Officers

A chairman and secretary are the only officers of the Arkansas, California, Indiana, Maine, and South Carolina Nutrition Committees. A few States have a vice chairman; Iowa and Virginia have two. In Chicago the president serves for a year as president-elect before taking

office. A few Committees combine the offices of treasurer and secretary. Connecticut, Minnesota, Missouri, and Virgin Islands each have two secretaries.

In Iowa and most other States where the term of office is two years, some of the officers are elected one year and the others the alternate year. Officers can serve no more than two consecutive terms in Connecticut, Maryland, Missouri, and Rhode Island.

In most Committees, members take turns being chairman. On July 1, of the 38 chairmen listed in our records, 14 were associated with colleges, universities, and experiment stations; 8 with public health departments; and 6 with extension services. The other 10 were with a farm organization, school lunch department, hospital, Government research laboratory, welfare agencies, and trade associations. One was a pediatrician in private practice.

Adaptation to Circumstances

For travel convenience the Wyoming nutrition group usually meets when and where the Blue Cross Executive Committee meets. In Nevada, the chairmanship rotates among the agencies that have programs requiring travel in the State. The secretary in Utah and New Mexico and the secretary and treasurer in Nevada are appointed by the chairman from among members who live in the chairman's city. The Indiana State Board of Health provides the meeting place and clerical services for the State Nutrition Council and the Board's nutritionist usually serves as secretary. Maine, California, and West Virginia Committees hold meetings in different sections of their States for convenience of members.

Subdivisions of a Committee

Professional members of Connecticut, Georgia, and Missouri Committees are grouped in "interest" sections and section chairmen serve on executive committees. Subdivisions of the Connecticut Council are (1) community nutrition, (2) home demonstration and 4-H clubs, (3) home service departments of public utilities, (4) schools, colleges, and universities, and (5) public food service.

Executive Committee

Many Committees have an executive body which acts for the Committee between meetings, formulates policies, advises the chairman, and directs efforts. In Oregon and Puerto Rico this committee also plans meetings; in Utah it appoints subcommittees.

The executive committee may consist only of current officers; or it may also include the past chairman, and chairmen of standing committees and sections. Occasionally other members are elected to the executive committee; West Virginia elects one member-at-large; Nevada, Illinois, and New York State, 2; and New Jersey 3. The executive board in Rhode Island is made up of officers,

past president, 4 elected members, and additional members appointed by the president to make a board of 10.

To provide continuity, 3 of the 9 members of the Chicago Nutrition Association's Board of Directors are elected each year to serve for 3 years.

For guidance on policy and procedure the Indiana Council chairman appoints an advisory committee.

The newly formed Maryland Nutrition Conference consists of a council of active members which formulates policy and directs efforts of the Conference, and an advisory board consisting of individuals and representatives of other agencies actively pursuing a nutrition program.

Other Committees

Subcommittees reflect a Nutrition Committee's program and specific interests. The Illinois Committee has (1) an educational committee to promote nutrition education in and out of schools; (2) an industrial committee to advise on group feeding in industrial and public eating places and to work with employees' families; (3) a school lunch committee to stimulate public interest and advise administrators on school lunch problems; (4) a publicity committee to disseminate nutrition information through the press, radio, and speakers' bureau; (5) a White House Conference committee to carry forward the recommendations of the 1951 conference; (6) a committee on membership; and (7) a civil defense committee.

FINANCING

A number of nutrition Committees support their activities by dues from members, ranging from \$1 to \$5 a year. A few receive contributions from civic and commercial organizations. Member agencies provide services and supplies for some Committees.

AFFILIATIONS

Most Committees are independent groups. A few have affiliated with another organization. The Massachusetts Nutrition Committee is a subcommittee of the Central Health Council. . . . the Mississippi, a subcommittee of the State Home Economics Association. . . . the New York City, a division of the City's Welfare and Health Council. . . . the Virginia, a subcommittee of the Virginia Council on Health and Medical Care. . . . the Wyoming, a subcommittee of the Wyoming Public Health Association.

MEETINGS

Committees meet twice a year, quarterly, monthly, or at the call of the chairman.

Nutrition Committees in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont recently met together to consider mutual problems. Members of the three Committees were polled in advance as to the problems they wished to discuss.

Some State Committees, like the Indiana Council, find that it facilitates exchange of ideas and information when they hold joint meetings with other organizations. The Council met with the Indiana Home Economics Association in 1949, the State Dietetics Association in 1950, the State Public Health Association in 1951, the State Dental Society in 1952, the Farm Bureau in 1953, and is joining with the Indiana Parent-Teacher Association in 1954.

ACTIVE NUTRITION COMMITTEES

The following States have active nutrition Committees according to our records on July 1. Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and two cities—Chicago and New York—also have active Committees.

If your State Committee is active and is not listed here we would like to hear from you. If your State has no active Committee you might want to consider with others in your State whether one should be established.

MATERIALS

Listing of these materials is for information of readers and does not necessarily mean recommendation. They may be obtained from the addresses given after the name of the publication. The symbol INF refers to Office of Information, U. S. Dept. Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

RECIPES FOR QUANTITY SERVICE. Food Service VII (PA-223) and Food Service VIII (PA-226). 1953. INF.

TOMATOES ON YOUR TABLE. L-278. 20 pp. 1953. INF.

MEAT FOR THRIFTY MEALS. HG-27. 47 pp., illus. INF.

A STUDY OF WEIGHT REDUCTION USING GROUP METHODS. REPORT OF PROGRESS 1950-1952. Processed. 198 pp. 1953. Single copies from W. D. Simmons, Dept. Research, Herick Hospital, 2001 Dwight Way, Berkeley 4, Calif.

IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION TO GOOD HEALTH. Health Information Series No. 31. Unpaged folder, illus. 1952. Single copies from Public Health Service, Dept. Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C.

[Materials for UN Day] From U. S. Committee for United Nations Day, 815 21st St., N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

A STATE-WIDE "BETTER BREAKFAST WEEK" PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY. 121 pp., illus. 1953. From Medical Society of New Jersey, 315 W. State St., Trenton 8, N. J.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION INSTITUTE . . . DEC. 1952. AH-56. 1953. INF.

READERS RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires returned last winter showed a diversity of opinions about topics that you wish to see covered in *Nutrition Committee News*. This was to be expected from the variety of fields you represent. The topics listed for consideration were judged by the number who read the article and the number who reported that in future issues they want this type of article expanded or continued "as is." By these criteria the 10 considered as the type of greatest value are given below in order of votes:

1. Nutrition for the Aging (Dec. '51)
2. Diets of Children (July '51)
3. How Are Food Practices Changed? (Feb. '52)
4. For Better Teaching of Nutrition (Feb. '52)
5. Positive Steps to Provide Correct Food Information (Mar. '52)
6. Some State Nutrition Committee Activities (Jan. '52)
7. U. N. Aids Countries to Improve Nutrition (Oct. '52)
8. Planning [School Lunch] Research to Meet Needs of Schools (Aug.-Sept. '52)
9. For a Safe and Nutritious Food Supply (March '52)
10. White House Conference Followup (Dec. '51)

A large proportion also indicated interest in having other topics continued "as is" or expanded. Relatively few (at most 10) suggested giving less space to or eliminating any of the topics that were considered.

Some respondents were interested in the form we used and asked for sample copies.

We received a 1 in 5 response to our questionnaire. Specialists in this type of survey say that a 20-percent return is about average for a mailed questionnaire. We have also learned that a followup might have prompted another 20 percent to reply and that a third request might have added 10 percent more. Our mailing list for that issue was about 3,000.

Of those who responded, 49 percent reported that they were in some phase of food and nutrition work and 30 percent in home economics. Physicians, dentists, and nurses were 6 percent and homemakers and all others were 15 percent of the total.

About 4 out of 10 of our respondents reported that they were working in elementary and high schools, colleges, libraries, experiment stations, and other educational and research institutions. Most of these were in schools. The next largest group, somewhat more than 2 out of 10, was in out-of-school educational work such as is done by

the Extension Service and Farmers Home Administration. Another 2 or more out of 10 were employed by public health or welfare agencies. One out of ten was employed by industrial and commercial firms including those supplying press, radio, and related services.

This distribution is similar to that of persons on the NCN mailing list for whom we know place of work.

| Place of Work | Persons on mailing list Percent | Respondents to questionnaire Percent |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Teaching and research institutions | 44 | 38 |
| Extension Service and Farmers Home Administration | 16 | 21 |
| Public health agencies | 13 | 18 |
| Hospitals, clinics, private practice | 6 | 4 |
| Social welfare agencies | 5 | 6 |
| Industrial and commercial firms, press, radio | 11 | 10 |
| Homes, clubs, others | 5 | 3 |
| | <u>100</u> | <u>100</u> |

During the 12 months beginning July 1953 we expect to publish six issues of *Nutrition Committee News* and shall be guided by your suggestions. Information on new materials and methods for use in nutrition education were most frequently requested. Suggestions for programs and more State news seem to be definite needs.

For the news, however, we must depend on you. If you will send us information about activities, accomplishments, and teaching devices you have found successful we shall pass them on via *Nutrition Committee News*. When you do, please include details on how it was or is being done. Comments indicate that readers are more interested in the "how" than in other aspects of projects.

Some Committees send us minutes of their meetings. Texas sends us its newsletter "What's Cooking." New York State and Connecticut have designated a member to send us material. Chairmen or secretaries of other Committees write when they have something special to report. From some we hear rarely or not at all. Lack of systematic news gathering prevents us from providing the kind of exchange many of you want. One reader suggested that "a method be devised for getting publicity from all State Nutrition Councils." Do you agree? If you do, can you suggest a method?